

Appln. No. 09/593,821
Amdt. dated February 1, 2005
Reply to Final Office Action of August 25, 2004

PATENT

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-29 were pending in the present application. Claims 1-5, 8, 10-11, 14-18 and 21-23 have been amended. Claims 6-7, 12-13, 19-20 and 25-29 have been canceled. Claims 1-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Pickett, U.S. Patent No. 6,154,465.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Present Invention

Embodiments of the present invention include telecommunications systems 2, 4, in Fig. 1 that are embodied as illustrated in Figs. 2 and 3. As can be seen in Fig. 3, a representative telecommunications system 70, is coupled to a packet-based network 220, and connected to a telephone trunk line.

The Examiner has cited computer 24 as a "telecommunications system" recited in the claims. To better define what is meant by "telecommunications system," in the claims, the independent claims have been amended to include reference to the telephone trunk line and to the packet-based network 220.

Additional limitations have been added, as shown above, to distinguish over Pickett. For example, embodiments disclose use of a "centralized auto attendant" among telecommunications systems. To attempt to cover this, limitations have been added to stress that a first telecommunications system may not provide auto attendant functions, while a second telecommunications system provides the auto attendant functions.

Pickett

The Examiner cited computer 24 in Pickett as running an "auto attendant." However, col. 24, line 15 et seq. actually describe an "office attendant"-type program. These are two very different things in the telecommunications industry. In Pickett, an "office attendant"

Appln. No. 09/593,821
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PATENT

allows a user to control incoming and outgoing calls via a computer 24. In other words, the "office attendant" is merely a console for an operator. This is very different from the conventional meaning of "auto attendant," which by-definition, means an automated process.

Additionally, the cited computer 24 is merely coupled via 80A to communications system 50. Computer 24 is not illustrated connected or coupled to a telephone trunk line, or any other telephone or telephone line.

Claims 1, 2-5 and 8-9

Claim 1 is not anticipated by Pickett. Claim 1, as amended recites, determining, at the first telecommunications system, that the telephone call will be transferred to an auto attendant process running on a second telecommunications system, wherein the second telecommunications system is remote from the first telecommunications system, wherein the second telecommunications system is coupled to the packetized network and connected to a telephone trunk line. Claim 1 also recites coupling the telephone call to the auto attendant process located at the second telecommunications system in response to the switching data associated with the auto attendant, and wherein the first telecommunications system does not provide auto attendant functionality in response to the telephone call.

As discussed above, computer 24 in Pickett is not both coupled to a packetized network and a telephone trunk line as is now recited. Additionally, Pickett describes an "office attendant" which is an Operator interface, and not an automatic call handling process, an "auto attendant," as recited. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, claim 1 is in a condition for allowance.

Claims 2-5 and 8-9, which depend from claim 1, are in a condition for allowance, for at least the reasons discussed in relation to claim 1, and more specifically for the additional amended and new limitations they recite.

Claims 10-11, 14-17, and 20

PATENT

Appln. No. 09/593,821

Amdt. dated February 1, 2005

Reply to Final Office Action of August 25, 2004

Claim 10 is also not anticipated by Pickett. Claim 10, as amended, recites receiving a telephone call from an external telephone line into a first telecommunications system, wherein the first telecommunications system is coupled to a packet-based network and connected to a telephone trunk line, and wherein the telephone trunk line includes the external telephone line, and determining a computer network address of a second telecommunications system and switching data in response to input data from the external telephone line, wherein the second telecommunications system is remote from the first telecommunications system, wherein the second telecommunications system is coupled to the packet-based network and connected to a telephone trunk line. Claim 10 also recites coupling the telephone call to an auto attendant running on the second telecommunications system in response to the switching data, and wherein the first telecommunications system lacks an auto attendant running thereon.

As discussed above, computer 24 in Pickett is not both coupled to a packetized network and a telephone trunk line as is now recited. Additionally, Pickett describes an "office attendant" which is an Operator interface, and not an automatic call handling process, an "auto attendant," as recited. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, claim 10 is in a condition for allowance.

Claims 11, 14-17 and 20 which depend from claim 10, are in a condition for allowance, for at least the reasons discussed in relation to claim 10, and more specifically for the additional amended and new limitations they recite.

Claims 21-24

Claim 21 is also not anticipated by Pickett. Claim 21, as amended, recites selecting a routing identifier associated with a centralized auto attendant running upon a second telecommunications system, wherein the first telecommunications system is connected to telephone lines and coupled to a packet-based network. Additionally, claim 21 recites wherein the second telecommunications system is connected to telephone lines and coupled to the packet-based network, and wherein the first telecommunications system does not include auto attendant functionality in response to the routing identifier.

Appl. No. 09/593,821

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Reply to Final Office Action of August 25, 2004

PATENT

As discussed above, computer 24 in Pickett is not both coupled to a packetized network and a telephone trunk line as is now recited. Additionally, Pickett describes an "office attendant" which is an Operator interface, and not an automatic call handling process, an "auto attendant," as recited. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, claim 21 is in a condition for allowance.

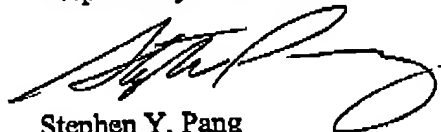
Claims 22-24 which depend from claim 21, are in a condition for allowance, for at least the reasons discussed in relation to claim 21, and more specifically for the additional amended and new limitations they recite.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



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